

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 DPW-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-09 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14

USIA-12 OMB-01 GAC-01 SAL-01 IO-12 AID-20 RSR-01 /116 W

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R 290325 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9311

INFO USDEL FRANCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5139

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 DAILY SITREP, MAR. 28

FOLLOWING MSG REC FROM AMCONSUL NHA TRANG ON MAR 28 ACTION  
AMEMBASSY SAIGON REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO:

C O N F I D E N T I A L NHA TRANG 335

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR 2 DAILY SIT REP, MAR 28

1. SUMMARY: REGION GENERALLY QUIET WITH PREDOMINANT ACTION VC ABF'S ON RVNAF OUTPOSTS. BINH DINH PRP SURVEY REPORTS PRG VILLAGE GOVERNMENT IN PHU MY DISTRICT. POLDELS AND HUNGDELS FAIL TO PARTICIPATE IN PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF VC MORTAR ATTACK ON LAM DONG. REGIONAL FPJMC IN PHAN THIET TO CONDUCT FINAL MEETING TODAY ON HEELS OF ACRIMONIOUS NEXT- TO- LAST SESSION.
2. SECURITY SITUATION: ACTION THIS PERIOD DOWN FROM RELATIVE HIGH OF PAST FEW DAYS. REGION GENERALLY QUIET, WITH WIDELY SCATTERED COMMUNIST ABF'S ON RVNAF POSITIONS REPORTED IN BINH DINH, PHU YEN, PLEIKU, AND KONTUM. MOST SERIOUS OF THESE WAS VC MORTAR ATTACK ON RANGER BATTALION HQS IN PLEI DJERENG AREA OF PLEIKU WHICH CAUSED 3 KIA, 11 WIA, AND DAMAGE TO ONE HELICOPTER ON GROUND.

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3. KONTUM SECTOR REPORTS TOTAL OF 29 MEMBERS OF RF COMPANY PRESUMED LOST IN MAR 25 BATTLE WITH VC ( SAIGON 5031, MAR 27 SIT REP)

HAVE STRAGGLED INTO BN HQ TO DATE; FIFTY REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR.

4. DARLAC REPORTS 26 MONTAGNARDS FROM REMOTE AREA OF BAN ME THUOT DISTRICT LEFT ON WOOD- CUTTING EXPEDITION TO THEIR FORMER BUON, DRANG PHOK, SEVERAL DAYS AGO AND HAVE NOT BEEN HEARD OF SINCE. SECTOR ASSUMES THEY HAVE BEEN ABDUCTED BY VC. ANOTHER TERRORIST INCIDENT OCCURRED IN LAM DONG ON MAR 25: HIGHLAND SCHOOLTEACHER THERE WAS ASSASSINATED BY VC WHILE WORKING IN HIS RICE FIELD.

5. ICCS: CANDELS AND INDOBELS ON BAO LOC SUB- REGIONAL TEAM VISITED HOSPITALIZED VICTIMS IMMEDIATELY UPON LEARNING OF VC MORTAR ATTACK AT DAI HOC TEA PLANTATION, MAR 25, IN WHICH 15 CIVILIANS WOUNDED. ON FOLLOWING DAY, SAME TWO DELS BEGAN PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION. POLDELS AND HUNGDELS WERE INSTRUCTED BY RESPECTIVE HQS IN PHAN THIET NOT TO PARTICIPATE. PC, AWARE OF PLANNED POPULAR DEMONSTRATION,

DECIDED AGAINST ACCOMPANYING ICCS PAIR TO LOCATION SO AS TO AVOID IMPRESSION PEOPLE ACTING UNDER HIS DIRECTION. CANDEL INTERROGATED WITNESSES AND PHOTOGRAPHED HOUSING AREA, WHICH HAD TAKEN FOUR MORTAR HITS. ICCS REPS ALSO INSPECTED FIRING SITE. CANDEL NOTED THAT HOUSING AREA SITS 150 METERS FROM RF OUTPOST ON STRAIGHT LINE BETWEEN FIRING SITE AND RF POSITION. REPORT WILL LIKELY INDICATE THAT VC INTENDED TO MORTAR OUTPOST WITH ALL ROUNDS FALLING SHORT. BEFORE DEPARTING HAMLET, ICCS PAIR HEARD LONG SPEECH FROM VILLAGE CHIEF AND ACCEPTED WRITTEN PROTEST FROM PEOPLE. CANDEL, IN REPLY, EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR VICTIMS AND HOPE THAT SUCH INCIDENTS WOULD NOT REOCCUR.

6. ALL CHIPS PRESNETLY INVESTIGATING MAR 10 INCIDENT NEAR TAN DIEN HAMLET, BINH THUAN. HOWEVER, POLDELS AND HUNGDELS IN PHAN THIET AND PHAN RANG ARE BOYCOTTING ALL GVN- SPONSORED SOCIAL EVENTS; CANDELS AND INDOBELS GO ON TOURS AND PICNICS WITHOUT THEIR EASTERN EUROPEAN COLLEAGUES.

7. CHEO REO POLOFF NOTES THAT PHU BON PROVINCE OFFICIALS ARE CONTRIVING TO USE ICCS AS INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN POPULACE AND VC. THEY SEEM TO HOPE ICCS MIGHT SUCCEED IN PERSUADING VC TO RELEASE ABDUCTEES AND IDENTIFY GRAVESITES. PROV OFFICIALS PLANNING TO PRESENT SUMMARY LIST OF COMPLAINTS TO ICCS, MOST OF WHICH INVOLVE VC ACTIVITY PRIOR TO CEASE- FIRE. PLAN ACCORDS WITH POPULAR MIS- CONFIDENTIAL

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CONCEPTION IN PHU BON THAT ICCS TASK IS NOT ONLY TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE FROM THE VC BUT ALSO TO RENDER SATISFACTION FOR PAST OR POTENTIAL COMMUNIST MISDEEDS. POLOFF NOTES THAT PEOPLE SEEM TO THINK JMC HAS SUBSIDIARY AND SUPPORTING ROLE TO ICCS.

8. HUNGARIAN LIEUTENANT TORKO ( PHONETIC), ONLY COMMUNIST REP EVER ASSIGNED TO CAM RANH POE TEAM, WAS PULLED BACK TO PLEIKU WITHOUT EXPLANATION CIRCA MAR 26. CANDEL SPECULATES THAT POLES AND HUNGARIANS FEAR POSSIBLE DEFECTIONS AND BELIEVES THEY WILL NO

LONGER DEPLOY ONE- MAN TEAMS. SOME INDICATION THAT CAM RANH TEAM WILL GET A HUNGDEL DUO BEFORE LONG.

9. FPJMC: FINAL REGIONAL FPJMC MEETING SCHEDULE MAR 28 IN PHAN THIET. IN CONJUNCTION WITH START OF ICCS TAN DIEN INVESTIGATION ( PARA 6, ABOVE), JMC REPS MET MAR 26 AND ARGUED SHARPLY OVER WHO CONTROLS TAN DIEN AREA AND ALSO OVER WHO WAS AGRESSOR IN OTHER RECENT FIGHTING NEAR PHAN THIET. FLURRY OF CEREMONIES AND OUTINGS MARKING DEPARTURE OF US JMC ELEMENT. POLOFF REPORTS THAT, AS FPJMC APPROACHES DISSOLUTION, IT APPEARS PRG REPS MAY BE PLANNING TO STAY ON IN PHAN THIET.

10. US JMT ELEMENTS IN TUY AN AND CHEO REO HAVE BAGS PACKED FOR ANTICIPATED DEPARTURES ( TO SAIGON P. M. MAR 28 AND TO PLEIKU MAR 29, RESPECTIVELY) BUT ARE AWAITING CONFIRMED ORDERS.

11. GVN REORGANIZATION: SAIGON RADIO BROADCAST REPORT MORNING OF MAR 28 THAT PROVINCE CHIEFS OF PHU YEN, LT. COL. TO, AND PHU BON, LT. COL. NGHIEM, WERE RELIEVED OF THEIR POSTS BY ORDERS OF PRES. THIEU EFFECTIVE MAR 27. NOT CLEAR WHETHER BROADCAST CITED CORRUP- TION AS THE REASON ( CAN THO 0093, PARA 3). NO LOCAL CONFIRMATION OF REMOVAL SO FAR IN EITHER CASE.

12. MONTAGNARD LEADERS AND SOME OF HIS OWN STAFF HAVE BEEN AFTER NGHIEM' S SCALP FOR SOME TIME, ALLEGING CORRUPTION AMONG OTHER THINGS, AND CORRUPTION CHARGES ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SOME FOUNDATION . ( NGHIEM IS ALSO ONE OF HANDFUL OF RVNAF OFFICERS AND GVN CIVIL SERVANTS WHO HAVE DEDICATED THEIR CAREERS TO MONTAGNARD AFFAIRS.) LT. COL. TO IN PHU YEN EARLY IN TENURE WAS ACCUSED OF CORRUPTION BY HIS THEN- DEPUTY FOR ADMIN, BUT ACCUSATIONS SEEM TO HAVE DIED DOWN LATELY. THERE ARE PROBABLY BIGGER FISH THAN THESE IN MR 2.

13. COMMUNIST POLITICAL ORGANIZING: BINH DINH PRP SURVEY REPORTS  
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PRG HAS SET UP " REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENTS" IN AT LEAST 13 OF PHU MY DISTRICT' S 15 VILLAGES. THESE " GOVTS" REPORTEDLY EXERT WELL- ORGANIZED AND MULTI- FACETED CONTROL OVER VILLAGE POPULATIONS LOCATED OUTSIDE SMALL ENCLAVES OF GVN CONTROL AROUND RVNAF POSITIONS IN THE DISTRICT. INITIAL REPORT SAYS VC CADRE HAVE COLLECTED PEOPLE' S GVN ID CARDS AND ISSUED PRG IDENTIFICATION. WHEN PEOPLE MUST TRAVEL INTO GVN ACONTROLLED AREAS, CADRE ISSUE TRAVEL PERMITS AND TEMPORARILY RETURN GVN IDS.

14. ATTITUDES TOWARD CEASE- FIRE: PHU BON DEP PC FOR SECURITY TOLD POLOFF THAT HE VIEWS PARIS AGREEMENT AS " TRAP" FOR RVN AND ASSERTED THAT COMMUNISTS NEVER INTENDED TO LIVE UP TO PROMISES. DPC CITED AGREEMENTS OF 1954 AND 19 62 AS EVIDENCE THAT IT IS FOOLISH TO TRUST IN COMMUNISTS KEEPING THEIR WORD. ENGLE  
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